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DOCKET No.: 0225-0031.30

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B. Webb
8/25/01

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF:

Sharat Singh

SERIAL NO.: 09/466,369

FILED: December 15, 1999

FOR: INDIVIDUALLY ADDRESSABLE SOLID
SURFACES FOR MULTIPLEXED
OPERATIONS

EXAMINER: Sisson, B.

ART UNIT: 1655

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENTAssistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Further to the continuing prosecution application filed August 6, 2001, please amend the application as follows and consider the remarks below, which are in response to the Final Office action dated November 6, 2000 in the above-identified application.

In the Claims:

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) In a method for performing a multiplexed determination on a surface of a solid moiety comprising independently addressable sites, the improvement which comprises:

employing mixtures of lanthanide dyes for encoding said sites in said solid moiety;
and

decoding said sites by their emission spectra and quantitatively determining the combination and ratio of said dyes at said sites.

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REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending for prosecution in this case. Favorable consideration of the following comments relative to the outstanding rejections as they may apply to the present claims is respectfully requested for the reasons that follow.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the opportunity to enter a preliminary amendment prior to examination.

I. Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to recite certain features of the invention. Support for the amendment can be found on, at least, page 16, lines 4-6, the experimental example beginning on page 12, and figures 3-5. No new matter has been introduced by way of amendment.

Also attached is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned **"Version with markings to show changes made."**

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Still (Acc. Chem. Res. 1996, 29:155) in view of Benson *et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 6,051,719), Rothman *et al.* (U.S. Pat. No. 4,921,878), and Heller (U.S. Pat. No. 4,824,776). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

A. The Present Invention

The present invention is concerned with creating individual addresses for solid surfaces for the purpose of improving the level of multiplexing possible in a single mixture. Improving multiplexing relies upon establishing as broad a variety of labels as possible that are readily distinguished. In the claimed invention multiplexing is increased by using lanthanide dyes that yield accurate, quantitative readouts without quenching or energy transfer. When dyes with these characteristics are employed, multiplexing can be dramatically increased because both *combinations* of different dyes and their relative *proportions* can serve as variables in the address. Using both combinations and proportions as a means of increasing multiplexing, as well as the utilities and advantages of

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this approach to multiplex labeling, has been previously unappreciated.

Dyes that are subject to significant quenching and energy transfer are not suitable to the present invention because these reactions will reduce quantum yield and broaden emission spectra. As a result, the quantitative dynamic range of detection is reduced, and accurate measurement of differing *ratios* of dyes is not feasible. Furthermore, spectrum broadening will reduce resolution within a mixture of dyes located on a single particle. Both quenching and energy transfer prevent an accurate quantitative measurement of the composition of a dye combination, and limit multiplexing capacity to the number of individual, spectrally resolvable dyes that are available. These characteristics are factors that have limited the level of multiplexing obtained with methods making use of organic dyes.

B. The Cited Art

Still discloses the use of solid supports, or beads or particles, which are labeled with chemical moieties. These moieties are used in combinations to create labels that encode a particle associated with an individual member of a chemical library. The method as disclosed by Still is limited to qualitatively determining the presence or absence of a particular chemical moiety, and does not teach the advantages to multiplexing by monitoring the *ratios* of chemical moieties in a label. As such, the level of multiplexing enabled by the methods of Still is limited to 2^N different labels from N different moieties (page 15 8, column 2, lines 1-3). The present invention discloses means for detecting both the combination *and ratios* of dyes composing an individual address. This dramatically increases the degree of multiplexing possible from a fixed number of different dyes. For example, with two label molecules called A and B, the methods of Still will provide for a multiplex of four (no label, A, B, 1 A+ 1 B). The level of multiplexing possible with the methods of the present invention is theoretically infinite, as the following combinations can be distinguished: 1A, 1B, 1A+1B, 1A+2Bs, 1A+3Bs, *etc*, 2As+1B, 3As+ 1B, *etc*.

Benson et al. discloses the use of multiple color fluorophores in the context of an automated DNA sequencing method, wherein each of four dyes used represents a specific nucleotide base. This reaction is conducted as a multiplex to generate sequence information for all four nucleotides in a single sample. DNA sequence information is

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obtained by generating a ladder of bands in a sequencing gel, each band yielding a fluorescent signal from the single dye that terminates chain elongation at that position in the sequence. While the sequencing reaction is effectively a multiplex of four individual reactions, the fluorescent signals generated from each band in the gel arise from a *single* fluorescent species, and as such, the method as disclosed provides for a very restricted level of multiplexing. The advantages of using dyes in combination on a single entity are not taught. The sequencing of *one* template from individual dye signals can be achieved because the required set of four organic dyes with resolvable emission spectra is available. However, a multiplex of eight, required for sequencing two nucleic acid templates, is not currently possible using organic dyes. The methods disclosed in the present invention would allow monitoring many separate sequencing reactions in a single mixture.

Rothman et al. discloses a list of fluorophores used in a variety of assay formats (column 10, lines 25-32). The Examiner cites this list in light of Applicant's disclosure, however it includes only one class of labels that is appropriate to the present invention (that of the lanthanide chelates), along with several others that are not useful in the present invention, including fluorescein, rhodamine, and umbelliferone (all organic dyes, which are subject to both the quenching and energy transfer reactions discussed above). Rothman et al. do not teach the advantages or particular properties of the dyes they list, and therefore their listing cannot be construed as a suggestion for the use of lanthanide dyes in particular. Furthermore, Rothman's disclosure does not suggest improved means of multiplexing, nor does it teach the use of dyes in combinations. In the present invention, lanthanide dyes are employed for overcoming severe multiplexing limitations encountered with the other types of dyes listed by Rothman et al.

There are additional characteristics of lanthanide dyes (as compared to organic dyes) that confer previously unappreciated advantages for quantitative, multiplexed labeling. These dyes absorb within a narrow spectrum, therefore a larger multiplex can be monitored using a single excitation laser. Lanthanide dyes emit over a broader range of frequencies and have very sharp emission lines, which facilitate resolution of multiple dyes within a mixture. Furthermore, the present invention discloses methods for labeling particles by dyeing them, which confers much greater flexibility in controlling dye combinations and ratios than can be obtained by chemical reaction.

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Heller discloses the use of a variety of fluorescent compounds, including lanthanide complexes, as useful in his invention (column 5, lines 25-27). Heller's list includes radioactive, colorimetric, and fluorescent labels, including fluorescein, Texas Red, Lucifer Yellow, pyrene, lanthanide complexes, etc. (column 5, lines 16-27). However, as pointed out with respect to the Rothman *et al.* citation, all but the lanthanide dyes disclosed by Heller are not useful in the present invention, and this citation should not serve as prior art simply in light of Applicant's disclosure.

Heller's invention is concerned with improving the sensitivity of hybridization assays, and he suggests the possible use of more than one fluorophore per probe *in order to improve detection* (column 5, lines 29-33). Specific methods for improving detection are not taught, so it is not possible to know the meaning of this statement. Several interpretations are possible, including increasing signal strength by attaching multiple molecules of a single type of dye to each probe, creating a unique signal through a Stokes shift by attachment of a pair of dyes that allow energy transfer, or differentiating species in a multiplex by using dye combinations. Heller does not specify conditions or dye combinations. His disclosure does not suggest a multiplexed system of quantitatively differentiated dye concentrations, nor does it reasonably suggest the use of multiple dyes in combinations in a single particle. The use of and advantages resulting from quantitatively measuring a combination of fluorophores present in different ratios within individual particles are not taught.

C. Analysis

According to MPEP § 2143, three basic criteria must be met to establish a case of obviousness. "First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the references or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations." MPEP § 2143.

None of the references, taken singly or in combination, provides motivation for combining the references along the lines of the invention. Obviousness requires some logical reason for combining the references at hand; otherwise, the use of the references will entail prohibited hindsight (e.g., In re Semaker, 217 USPQ 1). In particular, the fact that references can be combined does not make the combination obvious unless the prior art also contains something

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to suggest the desirability of that combination.

In the present case, the cited references do not show or suggest the critical elements of the invention, for the reasons discussed above.

Even if these elements were disclosed in the cited references, the prior art does not recognize the advantages of the invention, and thus provides no motivation for combining elements along the lines of the invention.

In response to the Examiner's argument that the features upon which Applicant relies are not recited in the rejected claims, Applicant has amended to claim 1 to recite detecting both the combination and ratio of dyes. The Examiner also argues that monitoring many separate sequencing reactions in a single mixture is not recited in the rejected claims. However, claim 7 recites "[a] method for determining the presence of at least 5 different nucleic acid sequences in a sample... and identifying the sequence of said nucleic acid molecules bound to said particles by the emission spectra of said particles." Such a method would allow monitoring many (at least 5) sequencing reactions in a single mixture. Thus, the features relied upon are recited in the pending claims.

Dependent claims 2-6 incorporate all the subject matter of claim 1 and add additional subject matter, which makes them *a fortiori* and independently patentable over Still, Benson *et al.*, Rothman *et al.*, and Heller. Similarly, dependent claim 8 in relation to claim 7, and 11-18 in relation to claim 10 are *a fortiori* and independently patentable over Still, Benson *et al.*, Rothman *et al.*, and Heller.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103.

III. Information Disclosure Statement

A copy of the Information Disclosure Statement submitted under separate cover is included herewith in accordance with 37 CFR 1.98 and pursuant to Applicant's continuing duty under 37 CFR 1.56 to bring any information which may be material to patentability of this application to the Examiner's attention.

IV. Conclusion

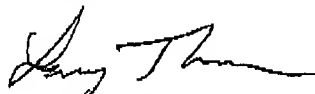
In view of the above remarks, the applicants submit that the claims now pending are in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is, therefore, respectfully requested.

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If in the opinion of the Examiner a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (650) 838-4405.

Respectfully submitted,



Larry W. Thrower
Registration No. 47,994

Date: 8-21-01

Correspondence Address

Tel: (650) 838-4300
Customer No. 22918